

#E1-2512  
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To: Members of the Surface Transportation Board  
of the U.S. Department of Transportation  
Section of Environmental Analysis

received  
9/1/06

Finance Docket No. 34284  
Southwest Gulf Railroad Company  
Construction and Operation Exemption  
Medina County, Texas

We contacted you approximately a year and a half ago by letter and have continued to follow the process of this application with great interest. We are contacting you again because we fear that you may be getting an incorrect impression that Medina County residents oppose this application for the Southwest Gulf Railroad (SGR). When you held the hearing in December 2004, we attended and listened to many of the opponents. Unfortunately many supporters did not feel the need to show up that day. The people of Quihi and the county as a whole overwhelmingly support this project. The opponents of this permit make up a minority, albeit a very vocal one.

Since that hearing, the supporters of the rail line have come out three times to outnumber the opposition. Two of those events were at the county courthouse. The other was a hearing in front of the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality with more than 200 people pushing for this project. We are tired of the delays and see the need to give our view. For too long we listened to self-appointed leaders claim to speak for the rest of us.

Also, many people who once opposed the rail line have learned more about it. For a long time they were led to believe that the quarry could only be started if the rail line were allowed. They now understand that the two are separate issues, and they see the benefit of the rail line. To disallow the rail line will have a detrimental impact on the area. The rail line will provide a greater level of safety, will protect the environment and will offer economic opportunities for other property. Also, Vulcan has already proven its interest in historic preservation and community involvement. We trust the people who work with that company and agree with them that a rail line is the better option for hauling material from the quarry.

We have been very impressed with the STB staff and the comprehensive work you have done. You have done a very good job of checking all the claims made by the opponents of this project. Most of those claims (such as railroad

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vibrations will cause the Medina dam to crack) have turned out to be false. We understand that your job requires you to look into those claims. Now that you have considered all those, we hope that you will grant this permit soon and allow the majority of Medina residents to feel that they have been heard.

From:

  
Glenn R. Schweers

  
Mary Jo Schweers

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